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ABSTRACT

Although the scope of this article is ancient history, many of the same issues and questions, such as the impact of leisure upon our contemporary society remain within the focus of the study. History has for its subject human nature, and the record of what has been thought, said, and done. In the study of leisure of ancient societies, thoughts, quotations, and actions contribute to its understanding. Even though proper historical research techniques are utilized, a problem arises since the word leisure does not exist within many ancient cultures. This presents the problem of how to study such a society. A technique of research is discussed which applies a definition and conceptual model of leisure, based upon our current understanding, to the literature of an ancient society. A conceptual model is utilized as a means of comparing contemporary thinkers as a standard for the societal view. This technique reveals the similarities, differences, and patterns of a certain concept of the ancient society to the contemporary understanding of leisure. (Author/LL)

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Special Considerations in Historical Research of Leisure of Ancient Societies

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Running Head: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Abstract

History has for its subject human nature, the record of what was thought, said, and done. In the study of leisure of ancient societies, thoughts, quotes and activities are the base to its understanding. Even though proper historical research techniques are utilized, a problem arises since the word leisure does not exist within many ancient cultures. This presents the problem of how to study such a society. A technique of research is discussed which applies a definition and conceptual model of leisure based upon our current understanding, to the literature of an ancient society. A conceptual model is utilized as a means of comparing characteristics of a concept under another name of a particular time period to the concept of contemporary leisure.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF LEISURE OF ANCIENT SOCIETIES

Historical research is an art that has little recognition in the leisure profession, yet its techniques are used constantly. The review of literature, interviews, surveys, record of observations, program planning, and policy-making all utilize some form of historical methodology and documentation. Although the intent of most work by the profession is not primarily designed for historical accuracy, the result of these forms of recordings should be identical to the conciseness of the traditional historical work. Best, in Research in Education (1959) wrote:

> History is a complete, accurate, and meaningful record of man's achievement. It is not merely a list of chronological events, but a truthful, integrated account in which persons and events are examined in relation to a particular time and place. Man uses history to understand the present in light of past events, and developments. It enables him to predict with some degree of assurance what is likely to happen in the future and, on the basis of that knowledge, to choose alternatives that will lead to more favorable decisions or courses of action. (p. 85)

In Education Research, Principles and Practices (1944), Smith commented:

> History as it is generally written seeks to give a richer appreciation of the past and the present and to provide guidance for and to arouse a keener interest in the future. It should tell not only what happened, but also why the man of time allowed it to happen. (p. 115)

A more thorough understanding of historical research and more concise methodology will contribute to the establishment of a solid philosophical foundation as well as building a reliable body of knowledge of leisure.

Likewise, investigation of past societies contribute to the leisure profession. Understanding the role of leisure type behavior of any period of history gives insight into the present. Garraghan (1973) commented: "The purpose of historical research is to produce a faithful record of the past, to suggest fruitful guidance for the future." (p. 10) Although leisure is a fairly new topic relating to a historical perspective, the framework within which it is deployed is inherited from the past. Thus, the future growth of the profession is dependant upon our understanding of leisure in the sociey of the past.

Although the scope of this article is ancient history, many of the same issues, questions and impact of leisure upon our contemporary society remain within the focus of study. The Italian idealist, Benedetto Croce is quoted by Garraghan (1973) as saying "every true history is contemporary history." (p. 20)

In other words, the sixth century is as much true history as yesterday's. The emphasis of Croce's statement is clarified by Garraghan (1973). He stated:

> The past lives on in its effects; the 'living past' is with us today, and hence can be properly called contemporary. ... Since history as past actuality survives in a sense in the human consciousness, to which it is present as an object of thought, and certainly the object of thought is contemporary with the thinker, all true history may in this sense be called contemporary history. (p. 20)

The information of the past must form patterns which allow comparisions of societies to contribute understanding to the many issues of contemporary leisure. Yet, information of leisure in ancient societies, excluding Greece, is severely lacking. Much of the philosophy and theory is dependent upon the writings of Plato and Aristotle, and the word "leisure" was coined in the Roman empire. These periods of history have received just recognition, but there are antecedents to the concept of leisure under other names that share the same or similar traits with the Greek and Roman concept of leisure. For this reason, research of other ancient societies is appropriate in examining the implications of leisure. For example, Israel is of particular importance since it advocated the concept of rest, which has exerted an influence on our contemporary society in practices of

Sabbath day, sabbatical leave, festivals and celebrations. Garraghan (1973) stressed that certain events and thoughts may carry a greater impact on specific contemporary topic. He wrote that "certain remote events have been more far-reaching, more significant in their effects than any of the recent events." (p. 19) With the impact of Judiasm and Christianity as a prime example of this influence, the analysis of the concept of rest in Ancient Israel would contribute to the understanding of today's philosophy of leisure.

Philosophy of History

History includes all things that have come to pass. So, Everything that exists in the present has a basis in the past, and, no matter how new and unique it may appear, it carries some of the past with it. The focus of history has usually been on human events, but actually it involves all processes of the world. The importance and understanding of the wholeness of history including the meaning and significance of leisure, has deteriorated significantly. This erosion has affected the quality and accuracy of studies, and will continue in the future. Weisberger (1987) in his article "American History is Falling Down" points to this problem:

> "The remarkable story of the American past is not being handed down in any satisfactory way to our descendants. (p. 27) ... A sense of wholeness of history has to be

> restored and passed on ... It is that sense of wholeness that makes for good judgement, for good ground for a nation to stand upon." (p. 32)

The scope of historical research is the totality of past human experience. Anything that man has thought, said, or done, is material for history, but practical research is concerned with finding those past events, forces, arrangements, ideas, or facts that had the greatest influence on the subject of leisure. But, past events are viewed from varying perspectives and our ability to understand and realize the significance is influenced strongly upon our knowledge of the world in which we live. These seemingly dichotomous viewpoints do not necessarily distort the results, since the past is basically known only to the extent that it is reflected in the present. This reflection is more fully understood when history is examined as "relativity in history" (Garraghan, 1973), which considers the fact the history, apart from personal experience, is known to us only indirectly through traces left behind in documents and other information. In other words, one may not be able to examine the actual facts, but only someone's knowledge or impression of them. Also, the historian probably examines only a portion of the documents rather than the totality of knowledge. However, this dilemma of actual history and relative history is not a roadblock to historical research. Garraghan (1973) wrote: "... the whole

question of relativity in history reduces to this simple distinction: as actuality history is absolute; as record it is or can be relative, in certain regards. Events are constant; what we know about them is a variable." (p. 6)

The first consideration in the examination of a society that has no word of leisure or recreation, is the researcher must analyze the dynamics of events, forces and ideas and determine the most similar concept to leisure of that period of time. Since the word leisure did not exist, the contemporary view must be the point of reference for the study of these elements of the society. Although it seems to be a burden to analyze the material, it also has an advantage that is of great benefit to the research. Without the word leisure, the historical documents would be free from bias. This allows for greater credibility of the material without an extensive search of all documents. Since history has meaning only to the extent to which it can explain how the contemporary world has been impacted, the partial input may be sufficient background of knowledge. Historical research involves the whole process of bibliographical search, reading of historical literature, and communication with historians and resource people of various disciplines to make the interpretation of the available data.

Two, the process of history is viewed as a continuum, an uninterrupted process from the earliest recorded incident to the

present. This view is concerned with the activities of individuals and the influence that the actions have upon others within the immediate surroundings, as well as the latent effects on others. The objective of the research is to adequately understand a specific period of time in relation to all other periods. Since it is absurd to consider that history can be pursued from the very beginning of time to the present, researchers must select a unit for study. This task is accomplished by restricting the project to a certain time and place. This allows for a smaller package which the researcher can handle in terms of quality of work and quantity of material. Garraghan (1973) sums the process by first investigating and then recording "in their casual relations and development, such past activities as are (a) definite in time and space, (b) social in nature, and (c) socially significant." (p. 10)

Three, in the historical research of leisure, the appropriate unit of measure would be a society, but due to its social nature, its time period and place are factors that must be carefully defined. The dynamics of change appear predominantly in the leisure time and leisure activities of the society, thus the societal transition must have concise documentation to verify the exact time period and place of that culture. In the periods of significant dynamic change, social and psychological theories may become significant contributors to the understanding and

explanation in the writing of history. Berkhofer (1969) wrote in the introduction of his book, A Behavioral Approach to Historical Analysis:

> The fundamental assumptions ... are that the subject of the historian concerns the past of man; that man individually and collectively is complex; that to study man in sufficient complexity requires social science concepts and theory; that man can only be studied as an analytical entity through some conceptual framework; and that once a knowledge of human behavior is gained, then other aspects of historiography fall into their proper sphere. History is its own discipline, but it needs to be enriched by borrowing from other disciplines for its own purposes. (p. 5-6)

The preciseness of historicity, the understanding of theory from other disciplines of study, the ability to discuss specific details of history without losing the whole picture, and writing history without presenting individual biases, in the study of leisure, become most important factors. Since the profession does not have its own foundational theories, it must depend upon other disciplines. The preciseness and avoidance of biases is especially needed so that the profession can mature upon a solid foundation of accurate information.

The Uniquenesses of Leisure

Fourth, the literature of leisure in every historical period records various degrees of idealistic thinking and actual behavior. Usually, leisure as a state of being is written in the idealistic thinking, while the recording of leisure-time activities are actual happenings. As a researcher, this consideration is the awareness of the possibility that the writing is a mixture of idealistic thinking and actual behavior. Whether reading the accounts or recording the findings, we may be perceiving the ideal from one of nine viewpoints:

	IDEAL	EXPECTED	ACTUAL
IDEAL LEVEL OF BEHAVIOR	1	2	3
EXPECTED LEVEL OF BEHAVIOR	4	5	6
ACTUAL LEVEL OF BEHAVIOR	7	8	9

The art of researching or communicating leisure is to be sure that all aspects of the concept is consistently in the same level, or differentiating when you write at a another level of behavior. The difficulty also lies with the recipient receiving a different message, like hearing ideal concepts while mixing it with expected level values. It is also important to press the point that idealism is commonly discussed while the actual experience of society is analyzed as short of that goal. Writing of the ideal of leisure is not uncommon. Brightbill (1961) wrote:

> The fact that men rarely, if ever, attains his ideal matters little. Indeed, if we admit the truth, we quickly concede that the world is imperfect and that actually we never really expect to achieve perfect happiness and contentment. It is the eternal search for these ideals and not their attainment that seems to provide the satisfaction. (p. 3)

Our conciseness in terminology is absolutely necessary to avoid biasing the true meaning of previous thinkers and historians, and keep the foundations of leisure pure in the future writings.

The fifth consideration focuses upon the interpretation of philosophy in history. Broad (1959) explained "the basic requirement of a philosophical theory is that it shall do justice to all the facts characteristic of the period with which it deals ... and that it shall neither ignore nor distort any of them. (p. 815) Levich (1985) points out that "philosophers, understandably more taken by philosophy than by history, have allowed a general problem in the former to control, then distort. ... The philosophy has a subject, and if it is to be of that subject, it must get the subject right." (p. 44) As pointed out earlier, leisure is not a term that has existed throughout world history. In fact, there may be several terms used which we could interpret leisure of today's understanding. This dilemma calls for a refining of a concept to compare the various periods of time. Nash (1984) sees history as an attempt to reconstruct in a

significant narrative the important events of the human past through the study of the relevant data available in the historian's own present experience. (p. 15) The researcher's interpretation will be guided by presuppositions which are so much a part of him that he cannot ignore them.

A sixth consideration to include in the historical research of leisure is the utilization of a definition and model of contemporary thinking as a standard for comparing the societal views. This technique reveals the similarities, differences and patterns of a certain concept of the ancient society to the contemporary understanding of leisure. In the study of Ancient Israel (Crabtree, 1982), the analysis was based primarily upon the perspective of ideal leisure within an individual. The definition of leisure used was "a self-perceived state of being characterized by goal-orientation, process and development, and balance." (p.4) From the study of current literature regarding leisure, a model (Figure 1) was designed and used as a reference point throughout the research. With these two tools, the researcher was able to concentrate his efforts upon the characteristics of model in the study.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Historical Research Methodology

The seventh consideration is that historical research is not irresponsible to scientific preciseness. The methods of research are designed to insure accuracy within the written results. Garraghan (1973) defined historical method as "a systematic body of principles and rules designed to aid effectively in gathering the source materials of history, appraising them critically, and presenting a synthesis (generally in written form) of the result acheived." (p.33) As mentioned previously, this approach of evaluating information should not be considered a unique characteristic to the writers of history, but should be a procedure of all types of research. By emphasizing the historical significance of all research, the results should contain a complete, accurate, and unbiased document. This factor is essential for when results appear on the printed page, the assumption is that they are accurate. Garraghan (1973) described this phenomenon as "the tyranny of the printed page," (p. 35) depicting the psychological effects of printed research. Therefore, historical method is not merely a matter of utility to the researcher, but a criterion for collecting, evaluating, and writing the findings of the research to assure accuracy in the final product.

Eight, historical research is a science, but not necessarily an exact science. As Garraghan (1973) argues it includes:

(a) a body of knowledge, not a heap of isolated, disjointed facts or truths, but a complex of facts or truths closely knit together according to some principles of rational, logical order, such as of time, space, topic, or causation; (b) an effective method; (c) a definite subject matter; and (d) the formulation of general truths. (p. 38-39)

But Garraghan (1973) is not insisting that history is an exact science, but that the procedures of historical research need to emphasize conciseness and accuracy. He identified some of the differences between exact sciences and history as:

1. The general truths or laws established by history are only morally uniform in their application, not rigidly uniform, as in the case of the truths or laws establishing by the exact sciences.
2. History, apart from a few terms used in methodology, is without technical terminology. It employs, indeed, certain stock words, such as progress, civilization, democracy, liberty, etc.; but none of these or similar words are rigidly fixed in meaning by usage or convention.
3. History works on its material, not directly, as the biologist or chemist wishes on his specimen in the laboratory, but indirectly through the medium of traces left in the past happenings. History is not a science of

direct observation, and in this regard it is set off distinctly from the exact sciences...

4. History, being the human story, has to deal with the self-determining agent, man. Free will is, therefore, a factor to be reckoned with in historical phenomena. It especially conditions historical generalizations and laws as bases of prediction. It introduces into history an 'incalculable element.' one to which the exact sciences are immune.
5. Prediction in history is less reliable than in the exact sciences... Just because they (men) are free to act this way or that, in last analysis it is impossible to make such forecast with the same rigorous certainty with which it is possible to predict the rising of tomorrow's sun or the precise amount of time it will take a falling body to pass through a given distance. Free will, the incalculable element in history, must be reckoned with. (p. 40-42)

With the intent of combining the scientific precision and conciseness to the historical studies, the research must arrange and present the data according to an effective plan. Garraghan (1973) mentioned that it requires candor, accuracy, thoroughness, and verifiability.

Critical history makes no attempt to pass for more than what

> it really is; it makes no pretense to any greater measure of scholarship or research than actually went into it. (p. 54) ... Accuracy is truth, and any history may no less than aim at being true. (p. 55) ... Thoroughness in history implies two things in particular: first, use of all important sources bearing on the subject in hand; secondly, treatment of all significant phases of the subject. (p. 57) ... By an accepted convention among scholarly historians, a work of history must be fortified with such indications of sources as will enable the reader, if he is so-minded, to check the accuracy of individual statements and the reliability of the work as a whole. (p. 58)

Ninth, the initial step in historical research is crucial. The choice of a topic is a common hazard in the area of historical research projects, in that it is stated too broadly (Best, 1959). After the topic is selected, a search of bibliographies for previous studies concerning that area of study is the appropriate procedure of events. This step serves two purposes: avoiding a replication of study and providing an estimate of available material. Assuming that there is not a previous study, the researcher begins mastering the available material so the specific subject of the research project will be an intelligent decision. Although the procedure of research seems rather simple and logical, the progress through those steps

must be deliberate for there are pitfalls in the process that should be noted. Many of these hazards are critical enough to cause a piggy-back effect upon the results. Whitney (1950) noted that "Human error is a constant, not an incidental factor in history." (p. 199) He felt that there were two areas: lack of availability of sources or ignorance of modern methods of historical research. This lack of preparedness in the study could significantly bias the results.

Significance to the Profession

The tenth consideration is how historical truths impacts issues of leisure. McCullagh (1984) lists justifications for historical research: First, it enables an understanding of our social and cultural inheritance, our institutions, beliefs and artifacts. And second, it provides knowledge of why various elements of our society and culture were created and evolved to their present form, and what functions they have served in the communities in which they have existed. (p. 3) Just as important, knowledge of the injustices perpetuated by the name of leisure provides good reasons for reform or replacement. Jaspers (1965) writes, "It requires the whole history of mankind to furnish us with standards by which to measure the meaning of what is happening at the present time (p. xiii) ... The deeper the foundations I acquire in the past, the more understanding my participation in the present course of events." (p. 271) Bill

Moyer (1985) refers to history as the "rearview mirror of experience" (p. 78) He wrote, "Looking to the past for guidance, it was said, can only inhabit the capacity to first detect the emerging characteristics of the future and then find new ways of dealing with them." (p. 81) It is important to consider the other side of the picture. Baron, (1986) wrote, "If a person does not possess any historical sense, he will not genuinely be interested in what happened in the past and still less in using such knowledge as a guide for some future behavior." (p. 1) We have heard that the only thing history has taught us is that no one (or generation) has learned from history. This is not entirely true with leisure, since we have not seen a repetitive cycle in history. Each society has experienced more leisure time with a new set of circumstances. The leisure discipline is a young but rapidly developing science. If proper techniques are used the first time, the philosophical foundations of leisure can be kept pure and previous mistakes not repeated.

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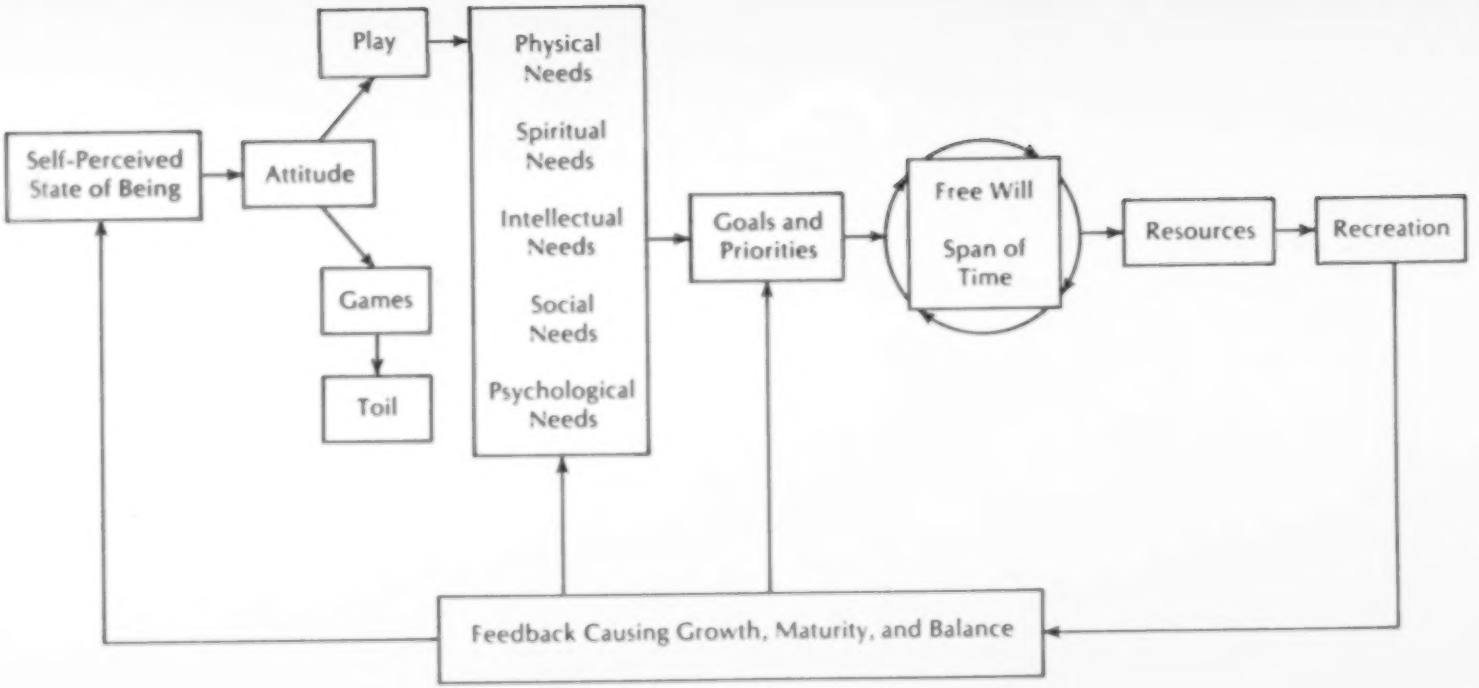
Figure Caption

Figure 1. Model of the interrelationship of components of an individual in the state of leisure.


Play
Physical Needs
Spiritual Needs
Intellectual Needs
Social Needs
Psychological Needs
Self-Perceived State of Being
Attitude
Games
Toil
Goals and Priorities
Free Will
Span of Time
Resources
Recreation
Feedback Causing Growth, Maturity, and Balance

TITLE: SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH OF LEISURE OF ANCIENT SOCIETIES

AUTHOR: CRABTREE, ROBERT D.

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ABSTRACT: HISTORY HAS FOR ITS SUBJECT HUMAN NATURE, THE RECORD OF WHAT WAS THOUGHT, SAID AND DONE. IN THE STUDY OF LEISURE OF ANCIENT SOCIETIES, THOUGHTS, QUOTES AND ACTIONS CONTRIBUTE TO ITS UNDERSTANDING. EVEN THOUGH PROPER HISTORICAL RESEARCH TECHNIQUES ARE UTILIZED, A PROBLEM ARISES SINCE THE WORD LEISURE DOES NOT EXIST WITHIN MANY ANCIENT CULTURES. THIS PRESENTS THE PROBLEM OF HOW TO STUDY SUCH A SOCIETY. A TECHNIQUE OF RESEARCH IS DISCUSSED WHICH APPLIES A DEFINITION AND CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF LEISURE BASED UPON OUR CURRENT UNDERSTANDING, TO THE LITERATURE OF AN ANCIENT SOCIETY. A CONCEPTUAL MODEL IS UTILIZED AS A MEANS OF COMPARING CONCEPTS UNDER ANOTHER NAME OF A PARTICULAR TIME PERIOD TO THE CONCEPTS OF CONTEMPORARY LEISURE.

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